aircraft due to wear and tear and the cyclic load subjected on them. From time to time, the manufacturers prescribe maintenance requirements for each type of aircraft. DGCA ensures that the operators strictly follow manufacturers instructions for maintenance of their aircraft. Thus, every aircraft of Air India is maintained as per manufacturers instructions and is considered airworthy and safe for operations.

(c) During the period 1st April, 2004 to 25th April, 2007, Air India operated 1,01,319 flights of which there were 281 Aircraft on Ground (AOG). Out of these, 237 flights were grounded due to technical reasons.

(d) and (e) For modernization of its fleet and expansion of routes, Air India has signed a purchase agreement with Boeing Company for the purchase of 68 aircraft comprising 8XB777-200LR,. 15X B777-300ER and 27X B787-8 all powered with GE engines for Air India and 18 X B737-800W all powered with CFM engines for Air India Charters Limited (a subsidiary of Air India). The deliveries of 50 Aircraft to Air India Limited are scheduled between June, 2007 and October, 2011 and for 18 aircraft by Air India Charters Limited between December, 2006 and October, 2009. Air India Express has already taken the delivery of six aircraft on 30.11.2006, 28.12.2006, 9.01.2007, 16th January, 2007, 22nd January, 2007 and 14th February, 2007 respectively.

Congestion at the airports

3509. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that domestic airlines have increased manifold during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, airlines-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that incidents of air-miss are increasing significantly on account of number of airlines and aircrafts increasing much faster than that of adequate equipment and staff; and

(d) if so, the steps Government have taken to cope with congestion caused by aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The number of scheduled domestic airlines have increased from 6 to 11 during the last 3 years. Air Deccan, Air Sahara, Alliance Air, Blue Dart Aviation (Freighter), Indian Airlines and Jet Airways were operating their flights in 2003. Five more airlines namely Go Air, Kingfisher Airlines, Spice Jet, Paramount Airways and Indigo commenced operations in the last three years.

(c) The number of air proximity incidents has not shown any significant increase in the last few years. The number of air-miss incidents per lakh movements for the last four years are 2.041 in 2003; 2.081 in 2004; 2.506 in 2005 and 2.559 in 2006. The marginal increase is due to substantial increase in Air Traffic Density in the past few years. Further, better surveillance mechanisms like installation of Airborne Collision Avoidance System/Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems on aircraft and increase in RADAR coverage area have enabled reporting and monitoring of every breach of minimum separation between flights/aircraft.

(d) The following measures have been taken/proposed to be taken to ease the air traffic at various airports of the country:-

(i) New high speed exit taxiways at Delhi and Mumbai airports have been constructed. A parallel taxi track has been constructed at Delhi airport by which runway occupancy time has been reduced considerable.

(ii) Simultaneous use of both runways at Delhi and Mumbai airport has started during the traffic congestion period.

(iii) Improved ATC procedures have been implemented.

(iv) Clearance Delivery Position has been established at Mumbai and Delhi airports.

(v) Restriction on general aviation aircraft movement during peak period at Delhi and Mumbai airport has been imposed.

(vi) ATC Automation System at Delhi and Mumbai are being upgraded.

(vii) Surface Movement Radar has been installed and is in operation at Delhi Airport.

(viii) Advanced Surface Movement Guidance and Control System (ASMGCS) is being installed at Delhi.

(ix) Automatic Original notice of the question was received in Hindiatic Dependent Surveillance and CPDLC have been installed at Delhi, Mumbai in addition to Chennai and Kolkata which are already having this system.

Engaging of private caterers by I.A.

3510. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines engages private caterers for on-board meal in their flights;

(b) if so, the names of caterers engaged in Srinagar-Delhi sector during the years, 2006 and 2007, indicating their allocations of work; and

(c) what was the summer schedule of catering in the year, 2006 in the above sector and whether the same has been changed in the year, 2007?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Airlines has not engaged any caterers at Srinagar station as there is no meal upliftment from Srinagar.

(c) Lunch was served on Srinagar-Delhi Sector during the Summer Schedule. 2006. There is no change in the meal service during 2007.

Aged aircrafts operating in the country

3511. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of aircrafts with more than 20 years of age, operating in the country, both in the private and public sectors;

(b) the details of the extra-safety measures undertaken for safe running of these old aircrafts;

(c) whether Government intend to ensure replacement of these aircrafts;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and